

August 15th, 2022

38 Years of Armed Struggle of the PKK in Kurdistan



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Preface

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38 years ago the Kurdistan Workers Party started armed struggle. With the offensive of August 15th 1984 and with the proclamation of the liberation forces of Kurdistan (HRK) the struggle against Turkish colonial fascism was advanced to a whole new level. The attacks on the outposts of the Turkish occupation in Eruh and Şemzîman might have been comparatively of small military significance but they opened a new chapter in the newer history of Kurdistan, Turkey and the Middle East as a whole. While after the military coup of September 12th 1980 a heavy weight was put on the whole country, the sound of the first shots on August 15th broke through the deadly silence.

The big revolutionary organizations and social movements of the 70s were crushed and most of its activists, members and sympathizers went to Europe in search of safety from the brutal NATO-militaryjunta. The young Kurdistan workers party as well was hit heavily, not even 2 years after its establishment and had to accept heavy losses. Thousands of cadres and sympathizers were imprisoned or murdered, the organizational web was torn and the freedom of movement heavily restricted. Thanks to the foresight of Abdullah Öcalan, who already in 1979 warned insistently of the possibility of a military coup, it was possible for the party to retreat the small amount of around 250 of its cadres into safe areas, at the beginning to Syria and later to Lebanon. In the Camps of the Palestinian liberation movement the party was able to restructure under the leadership of Abdullah Öcalan and to prepare its coming tasks.

For Abdullah Öcalan and the PKK it was clear that the path in to the foreignness of Europe would lead to liquidation and the disintegration of the organization. Only a return to Kurdistan, a continuation of the struggle where it started and with the society that had to lead it, could be a valid option and could prevent the marginalization. With this in mind the preparations to build a guerrilla army that would return to the country and declare war on colonization soon started. But internal organizational problems, the continuing fight about the line with the compromising and opportunistic tendencies, as well as the outer circumstances, led to the preparations taking more time than originally planned. Also the invasion of the israeli army in 1982 stumped the build up and educational works.

At this time the militants of PKK fought shoulder to shoulder with the partisans of the Palestinian organizations against the Zionist occupation forces. The defense against the Zionist aggression was not only an important military experience but it also formed a lasting band between the fight of the Kurdish and the Arab people. With the offensive of 1982 imperialism and the israeli occupation tried to break the revolutionary wave in the middle east that had been lasting since the 60s and to bring an end to the middle eastern guerrilla. But the offensive of August 15th 1984 brought this fight from the valleys and plains of Lebanon and Palestine to the mountains and peaks of Kurdistan, kept and protected it like embers and reignited the fire again. With the offensive of August 15th a new epoch of guerrilla warfare not only for the peoples of Kurdistan and the middle east but for all of struggling humanity. While in the 90s the armed struggles in Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as in the metropolis had to endure one defeat after another and broke apart under the pressure of a counter revolution that had been going on the offensive, in the valleys and mountains of Kurdistan a revolutionary army, that made the preservation of guerrilla warfare as a method and its advancement into the 21st century as their holy duty, gathered. Despite all the attacks the fight of PKK was able to persist through all unfavourabilities and became day by day a strong factor in the region. What started as a small group of 15-20 militants, that were determined to the utmost, grew to an army that would change the face of the middle east for ever.

Out of this small group of fighters there grew the power which gave birth to the revolution of Rojava and today freed more than one third of Syria. Starting with 20 rusty, old and rickety rifles from the black market it became rockets, heavy guns and tanks, which nowadays are ready to defend the revolution against every aggressor. Starting with 20 partisans, roaming through the mountains ungainly, without knowledge on how to protect themselves against adversity of nature and the tough life, they became a guerrilla army, which nowadays brings one of the biggest military machines with all their equipment to the edge of despair, using their fancy methods, perfected tactics and their unique style of moving around. The method of the guerrilla of the 21st century, developed by the PKK, has proven, that even in the 21st century the greatest and most powerful technique is still the human itself and even the most sophisticated machinery is doomed to failure facing the will and the creativity of a trained and professionalized guerrilla force. The 15th of August is

insofar relevant all over the globe today, because today the PKK was able to prove the method of the guerrilla also in the 21st century to be not outdated and obsolete but rather, maybe today more than ever before, a universal weapon of the suppressed in the fight against a sheer overpowered enemy now and in the future. The 15th of August and the ongoing and unbroken guerrilla warfare in Kurdistan is the proof nothing is impossible and the hope for another world does not have to stay a dream or distant utopia. This brochure shows the impression of this reality and can become a source of inspiration and power for the readers in the imperialist metropolises. This makes it even more important to take this knowledge of the past 38 years of the revolutionary movement and to make it accessible and to collectivize it. With this one and many other brochures and texts there were many steps taken in this direction, but still there is a sheer infinite treasure trove of experience and knowledge concealed. It is the task of all of us to appropriate this knowledge, to study the experiences of the revolution in Kurdistan on the basis of authentic material and to incorporate them in the fights for freedom worldwide.

Interview with Sarı Hüseyin

Spring 2022

Heval Sarı Hüseyin was present on August 15th, 1984, when the PKK carried out its first action. In an interview, he talks about how he joined the PKK, about life in the mountains and the significance of the PKK's first armed action.

My name is Ragıp Aslan, which is my official name in Turkey, my alias is Sarı Hüseyin. I grew up in the village of Hassari near Kercews, which at the time belonged to the city of Mêrdîn, in Bakur, the part of Kurdistan occupied by Turkey. In 1976, Abdullah Kumral¹ came to our village, a teacher from Helfeti, he was Armenian, and we got to know each other. At that time, there was a revolutionary movement in Turkey. There were Deniz Gezmiş², Mahir Çayan³ and Ibrahim Kaypakkaya⁴. There was a big campaign. This campaign affected all of Kurdistan and Turkey. Everyone was talking about these revolutionaries. Our village was big, about 1000 families, about 20 teachers came here to teach. Most of them were in the Halkın Kurtuluşu⁵. When Abdullah Kumral came, he brought new ideas: "We want an independent Kurdistan." That was new for us, to hear such words. The question arose as to who would be the leader in this. He said: "We don't have a leader." Therefore, I did not know who they were and who their leader was. Revolutionaries without a leader? What was this movement? I didn't know anything about them. He said, "We are called the Revolutionaries of Kurdistan. We are also supported by Turkish revolutionaries." We were happy because this movement was against the state.

Turkish revolutionaries stood up against the government at this time. Ibrahim Kaypakkaya was arrested and tortured. This information was spread and people talked about how the government was arresting and torturing those who rebelled against them. And photos were published of how they were arrested and tied up. This idea of a free and independent Kurdistan was good and new for us, because we are Kurdish, we liked the idea. That is why we built a relationship with Abdullah and his friends. That was in 1976.

1977 Elections

Government elections were held in 1977. The procedure was as follows: The leader of the village or tribe, the Ağa⁶, collected the ballot papers and used them to elect those he wanted. No one knew how an election works and who they elected.

Abdullah asked us why we were giving the votes to the Ağa and why he could do what he wanted with them. We knew nothing about it. He said that maybe the Ağa was selling the votes. Then someone else also came to the village and solicited the votes of the villagers and people sold their votes or gave them in exchange for the promise of a job. Some of us refused to hand in the ballots and that's why we argued with the Ağa. We wrote slogans with stones on the walls: "Leave Kurdistan! Freedom for Kurdistan!". We even wrote it in the mosque, we were able to do that, no one stopped us. The Ağa went to the police and complained about us. The police came to the village and 90 people were arrested. The name of the Ağa was Mohammed Ağa. I fled, also because I had to join the military. But I didn't know where I should go, there were no mountains, only villages. I went to Saray, to the village of my uncle, who had also been arrested in this action. However, they found me there and arrested me. They took me to Mêrdîn. For around one month they kept me in prison, where I was tortured. They said, I was a spy and similar things. Later I was released under the condition, that I had to do the military service. That was around the time of the elections 1977. I went back home for a few days.

Abdullah Kumral was arrested and brought to Kızıltepe/Qose. I went to him and he asked me, what happened and I told him that they wanted me to do the military service. I also said, that I didn't want to, that I wanted to join their movement. He told me, there was no movement. "Do your military service.", he said to me. So I went to the military. That took 1 and a half years, afterwards I turned back home.

1. Abdullah Kumral, born 1955, founding member of the PKK, was killed in the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

2. Deniz Gezmiş, 1947-72, founder of the People's Liberation Army of Turkey (THKO). He was executed by the Turkish regime.

3. Mahir Çayan, 1946-72, founder of the People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey (THKP-C). He was killed after being taken hostage by a unit of the Turkish special forces.

4. Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, 1949-73, founder of the TKP-ML, died by torture in prison.

5. splintering of the THKO.

6. The Ağa does not only act as head of the village, but represents especially the economic class of feudal landowners.

At that time there were fights between the revolutionaries of Kurdistan and Fahro Ağa, because we had won the municipal elections, therefore he fought against us. Fahro Ağa was related to Mohammed Ağa, the Ağa of our village. In the fights one of us was wounded and we killed one on the Ağa's side. That's why we had to leave the village. Back then Heval Agit⁷ was responsible for us. When I went to the mountains, there was no one, no one joined the movement. That was 1978/79. There were no comrades, nobody. The government made a campaign to arrest people and force them into military service. They arrested many people, but we went into the mountain villages until the military coup on September 12th, 1980. Heval Agit then left us and we were only three, a man from Kerboran, me and Heval Mizgin⁸ the singer, she was very young, she was still a child. We had no money and everywhere were soldiers and we could not stay anywhere or do anything. It was as if Turkey had occupied Kurdistan all over again. Soldiers were coming to the villages everywhere, beating and arresting villagers, but we could not do anything. Before that, friends came to us from Istanbul, Antep and Dersim, and from our village, they were sent to Syria. We didn't know what was in Syria, what they were doing there. Heval Agit came to me once and asked about my father and brother who were living in Qamişlo in Syria. He asked me to draw a map of exactly where they lived, but wouldn't tell me what he needed it for.

There were only 4-5 people. I then learned that they were Baki Karer⁹, Kemal Pir¹⁰, Hamit Avcı¹¹, Heval Agit and Ekrem. Ekrem was a Turk. No one told us that they would go to Lebanon or Palestine. When Agit and his group came back, they told me they had decided to start trainings to become guerrillas. Kemal Pir went to Ferqîn at that time, he was arrested there and we started to retreat. We were in a village and comrades came to us to take us from Sevin to Syria. We were near Mêrdîn, in a village near the Tigris River. We had nothing there. It was in the mountains and the roads were bad. That's where the friends came to, but we sent them from there to Nuseybin¹².

One day we lost contact with everyone. There were three of us and we didn't know what to do. We had three pistols, we wanted to sell them to get money, but we couldn't find anyone who wanted to buy them. Because the government was taking the weapons from the people. We decided to send Mizgin to Amed/Diyarbakır. Heval Abbas¹³ was responsible for Amed/Diyarbakır at that time, but we didn't know that yet. We asked Mizgin if she would be willing to go to Diyarbakır and said, "We have two options, either you will be arrested or you can meet our comrades and organize help for us. This was before the military coup [of 1980]. Mizgin was still very young and she wore the clothes of the villages, but she agreed to try to get to Diyarbakır.

When she was not back after 10-15 days, we thought she had been arrested. But suddenly we saw her coming back. She brought us money with which we could pay smugglers to take us to Syria. That's how we came here to Qamişlo. And that's how I came to the movement.

7. Mahsum Korkmaz, 1956-86.

8. Ozan Mizgin, d. 1992, artist, was the first woman in a military leadership position.

9. Baki Karer, founding member of the PKK, later betrayed the party and went to Europe.

10. Kemal Pir, 1952-82, founding member of the PKK. Died during a death fast in the prison of Amed/Diyarbakır.

11. Hamit Avcı participated in the organizing process of the PKK. In 1985, he was killed by KDP forces in the Zağros Mountains.

12. on the border with Syria.

13. Duran Kalkan, born in 1954, is now a member of the PKK's Executive Committee.

Lebanon

From Qamişlo, Serok (Abdullah Öcalan) sent me to Lebanon and Palestine. I spent about two years in Lebanon, where I received training. The training consisted of military and political parts, practice and theory. What are explosives, how are they used? We learned how the guerrillas fight in Palestine, etc. This lasted until 1982 - we were 80-90 people at that time - when Israel attacked Lebanon. We fought together with the Palestinians against Israel and many of our comrades fell Şehîd¹⁴, including Abdülkadir Çubukcu¹⁵ and Abdullah Kumral. When Israel occupied all of Lebanon, we fled. Some of our comrades were captured. We managed to escape to Bekaa¹⁶ on the Syrian border, where Serok had asked us to come. We held a conference to prepare ourselves to go back home, to the mountains, to take up the guerrilla struggle. The conference was held in Lebanon, at the PFLP base and together with the PFLP and other Palestinian organizations.

Then we came to Damascus, but we had no contacts there. Our group, with which I came to Damascus, was about 20 people. We also had no contacts with the Syrian government. But the Syrian government did nothing against the Turkish revolutionaries. They did not arrest them. There were many revolutionary movements and all the revolutionaries from Turkey came here to Syria, but the government did not say anything against this. There were about 80-90 revolutionaries from Turkey here.

A meeting was held in Damascus. Kurdish and Turkish revolutionaries met in Damascus to discuss what they could do together. They decided to form a front. At that time, Masud Barzani had¹⁷ peshmergas¹⁸ in Lebanon.

And Barzani and Öcalan met and initially agreed that they would support each other and not interfere in each other's affairs. But then the front did not materialize, they did not come to an agreement.

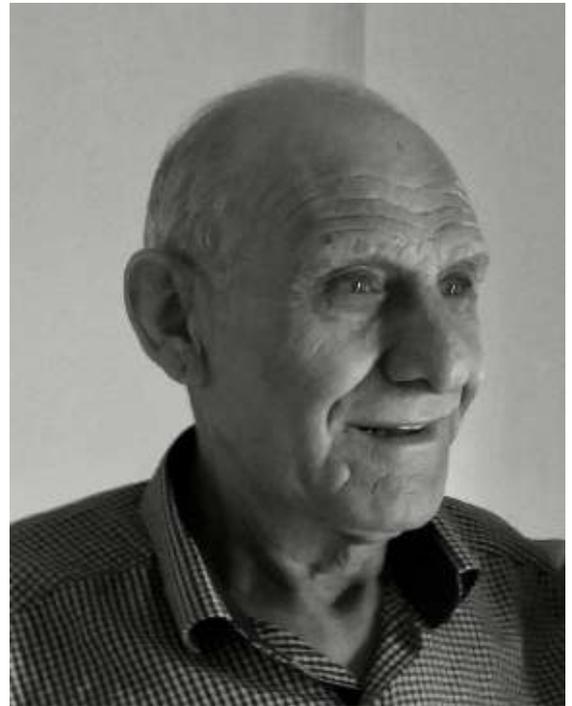
To the mountains

The Palestinians helped us; they gave us weapons and ammunition. With these we went to Qamişlo, where always two or three of us stayed with relatives. But our situation was precarious; we were strangers, had no money and also nothing else. We were there 23 people, also Terzi Cemal¹⁹ and Gözlüklü Ali²⁰ were with us. After about two weeks, we started moving again and went to the Turkish border at Mount Cûdî.

We built boats from trees and plastic and crossed the border to Bakur²¹. With us were also Peshmerga fighters. We didn't know our way around at all, didn't know the mountains or the people.

Together with the Peshmerga, we went to Mount Cûdî. There we stayed in a village. We went to a family and they gave us food. Barzani had asked us not to say that we were Apocu²², but to tell the people who asked us that we belonged to him. The villagers came and looked at us, our clothes and faces. We didn't look like Peshmerga, we had clothes like the Palestinians. They looked at us and asked who we were.

We answered that we were Peshmerga, but they said, "No, you don't look like Peshmerga, we know the Peshmerga." They also asked about our language. They had doubts. So we went during 45 days until we came to Lolan hill, on the border between Turkey and Iran, there was Barzani's camp. There were communist camps and peshmerga camps. There I met Heval Agit, who had arrived with the first group. We were the second group. That was in 1982. We built our own houses with stones and mud. After us, many more groups arrived until we were 80-90 people.



19. Terzi Cemal (Ali Ömürçan) was executed as a traitor by the PKK in 1993.

20. Abdullah Ekinci.

21. Part of Kurdistan occupied by Turkey, Northern Kurdistan.

22. Follower of Abdullah Öcalan.

Contradictions

We had splitters there again. This already happened in Lebanon. one of them was Semir from Dersim²³, maybe you have heard of him. In Lebanon they refused to participate in the conference and to support the move to the mountains if it was only decided by the PKK. They justified it by saying that we didn't know the mountains, the trails, the region, and that it was impossible to live in the Zağros Mountains. They said, "Apo put you on a plane without a ticket." With this they wanted to say that he was sending us to an unknown future.

In the mountains, Semir from Dersim was with us. He had already said at the conference in Lebanon that we were not capable of fighting, but then came along anyway. The leadership of the group in the mountains consisted of Baki Karer, Davud, Semir and Sağır Cuma. They also disagreed and the party split into two. One side said they did not agree to stay in the mountains and fight and the other side stressed the importance to fight and committed to it. Davud and Baki Karer said they would not fight. They said, "How will you fight? You can't even move in these mountains, how are you going to fight?" The group that decided to fight were Apocu, Hevalên Serok (friends of Ocalan): Abbas, Cuma, Agit, Gözlüklü Ali and Semir of Batman, not the Semir of Dersim. Others, however, ran away.

Life in the mountains

It was cold and we had nothing to eat, we had nothing at all. Every day we got only one jar of sugar, one jar of rice, one jar of bulgur and one can of tomatoes. But we were 80 comrades. It was very hard. We were starving. Then we built a bread oven, for that we used stones and dug a hole in the ground where we made a fire and with the flour we had we baked bread. One of our friends from Dersim stole all the bread we had and fled. He was hungry and he surrendered to the government. The next day we woke up and saw that we had no more bread. The Peshmerga came to us and Heval Abbas (Duran Kalkan) brought us bread and they made tea for us. When the Peshmerga saw that we were short of bread and had only hard bread, they were very surprised and asked how we could eat that, saying it was just as hard as wood.

When it started snowing, me and one of our friends went to one of the villages in Başur. We told ourselves that maybe we would get something to eat, some flour or something. We came to a village and they brought us soup and tea and we ate everything and drank about 20 cups of tea because we were so hungry. And they hosted us and were very astonished. They looked at us and asked us who we were and how we lived. We told them our story. Then we went to the Muhtar, the village chief. He asked what we wanted and we asked for flour, but he wanted money for it and we could not pay. We told him that we and our 90 friends would starve in the mountains if he did not give us flour, but he refused. Therefore, we went to the hill in the middle of the village and sat down there and stayed there until night. The villagers asked us to come inside and offered us food, but we said, "No, we are on strike. If you don't give us flour, we will stay out here without eating." So they agreed and gave us six 15 kg sacks of flour and animals and tobacco. I remember the tobacco, it was full of pigeon excrement.

We also had conflicts among ourselves. Some killed the others because they did not agree with each other. And the Peshmerga and the communist parties also avoided us. They said we should not have come to the mountains to fight. They all agreed with each other the communists, the peshmerga and Turkey.

We were in Şemdinli district (in Bakur on the border with Iran and Iraq). Sometimes we went to the people in the villages there and asked for food or for flour and sugar, and if we could get some, we brought it back to the friends. We did not light fires in the mountains so that we would not be seen. Our training in Lebanon didn't help us much, the reality was very different.

The people in the villages were uneducated. When we talked about Marxism and asked them if they knew anything about it, they laughed at us. They did not know about it. They also laughed at us because of our language. We were sad because the villagers didn't understand us and we didn't understand them. They always asked who we were, why we came here and what we wanted. I kept asking if I could sleep and stay in the village, there was no one there, no soldiers, no police, but we were not allowed to stay. We took food from the village and hurried back to the mountains. In the mountains there was water and springs, but if we wanted to drink water, we were not allowed to.

23. Çetin Güngör, 1957-1985, founding member of the PKK and member of the Central Committee, before he betrayed the party and went to Europe.

I think that in the history of mankind there is no one who has had such great difficulties as we did. There were caves in the Zağros Mountains and the other mountains in the region. But no one could live there. We, however, stayed. We suffered a lot. I have never read of such suffering in books. No one ever told me about a life like this. There was no support and no base and no money, no friends. We had no one. No parties, no support, not even the mountains, you know, the mountains are not friends for everybody. We could not move in the Zağros Mountains. Alexander the Great perished in the Zağros Mountains. We had a strong will. To this day, I can't really believe it. Our needs were never satisfied. In the Dos Mountains, we were always hungry. We were like wolves, like bears, we lived like animals, like wild animals.

In 1983, we got the instruction that we should retreat. We had not fired a single bullet, we were not allowed to fire. We had 120 bullets with us and they stayed with us. Our practice was good, but it could not go on like this. The leadership ordered us back to Başur for more practice and then to go back to the mountains. In Başur, the first thing we had to do was write reports. Serok Apo read our reports and sent us instructions on them and asked Abbas (Duran Kalkan) and Agit to come to him. He instructed us to go back to the villages and adapt to the people there. We should be close to the villagers, go to the tribal leaders, marry their daughters, pray. Yes, he asked us to pray. Because the villagers were like that, they had no education. They knew nothing except their animals and how to raise sheep, how to prepare for winter in summer and then eat in winter, what they prepared during summer. That is their work there. There was no agriculture, because the region is suitable only for sheep breeding. Each family or house had about 1000 sheep. When we went to them and asked for bread, they would say, "No, we won't give it to you." But if you asked for a sheep, they would give it to you, because they had many sheep. Serok told us we had to talk to them about sheep and figure out what they needed. "Talk to them the way they talk. If you go there and talk to these simple people about Marxism, it won't work, they don't know that." So we started again and went back to the villages.

The first action

Once we decided that we were going to start fighting, we started exploring the region and went to the cities. On August 15th, 1984, we started with three groups. In the group that went to Şemzînan/Şemdinli there were 16 friends, in Agit's group there were about 30 friends who went to Dihê/Eruh and the group that went to Başkale-Çatak led by Terzi Cuma included also about 30 friends. I was in the team that went to Şemdinli. During one hour we attacked the city of Şemdinli and came back successfully. Agit's group was also successful, but Cuma came back and said they could not have attacked. August 15th was a very very big step. Everyone heard about it and was surprised, in Turkey, in Iraq. Everyone wondered who had done it. What are they? How do they fight and how can they control a city for an hour? They called it the "Revolution of Şemdinli" and the "Revolution of Eruh". The "first bullet", that is August 15th, triggered a lot of things. On the one hand, it gave us dignity and our enemy began to fear us. Our enemies also wondered who we were, where we came from. Before that, they told people that we were Armenians and thieves who came to the villages to steal from the residents. Because Hakkari is an Armenian place. They did not say that we were Apocu or a certain organization.

By becoming known, people opened their doors to us and we could go to the villages. In the winter of 1985, for example, there were three of us on the road.

It was snowing and we came to a village and every night we could stay in a different house. Because we had nothing, only our bag and our gun, no money, no base camp, nothing. If we needed something, we had to make it ourselves. When night fell, we slept where we were. One of the tactics of the guerrillas is that no one can know where you are. Everything you do, you do without telling anyone. When we left a village we left it on one side, but then went in the other direction so that no one knew where we were going. That's how the guerrilla started.

Before August 15th, we had not done any operations, but after that we started and the guerrilla started. Before that, we only did propaganda, we had weapons, but we never fought. We sounded out, we researched, we inquired, but we didn't have a fight. After August 15th, we officially started operations against the enemy as guerrillas. We started operations everywhere.

When we killed soldiers in actions, we took away their bags and used their things for us, their underwear,

their clothes. When Serok Apo found out, he sent us instructions to stop doing this: "You're becoming like street thieves!".

What happened on August 15th showed our critics that we were right. Before that, everybody said we couldn't do it, the people of Barzani, the communists, everybody. Everyone disagreed and said we were not capable.

They asked us how we were going to fight, we had no base. "How are you going to start the revolution without a base?" And it's true, we didn't have a base. We didn't have any role models either. And then on August 15th, people saw strength, they realized that we could do something. Therefore, they believed in us and saw in the PKK a force and that we can do a lot for them.

We also became known internationally. We received financial support, open doors, all over the world, internationally and locally, regionally. It also made us stronger in prison and within the organization. Because before that we had two different lines and we didn't agree. But after August 15th, everyone agreed and we could do or do anything we wanted. In our revolutionary history, August 15th was a very very important step.

Before that, we had suffered a lot and August 15th meant that this suffering was not pointless. It proved that the PKK line and ideology is correct.



*Sarı Hüseyin
Spring 2022*

August 15th, 2020 - 36 Years of Armed Struggle of the PKK in Kurdistan

From an internationalist comrade from the movement on the ground

03.09.2020

The significance of the anniversary

For the fighting Kurdish people, for the revolutionary movement in the Middle East but also worldwide, it therefore has an extraordinary, an outstanding, a historical significance. Therefore, on the occasion of the thirty-sixth anniversary of the guerrilla offensive of August 15, 1984, it is necessary today to highlight once again the true meaning of this anniversary in all clarity and depth, and to illuminate and remind ourselves of the historical context, the background, but also the importance and relevance of the perspective of August 15 for us today and for the phase of struggle that currently lies ahead of us. When the then newly formed Kurdistan Liberation Forces fired their first bullets at the positions of the Turkish colonialists on August 15, 1984, more was destroyed than a simple military post. What was killed by the guerrillas' gunfire was not only the occupying soldiers, but also the fear, the spirit of submission and the surrender itself. The revolutionary offensive of the guerrillas is significant above all in this sense, because above all it shattered the myth of the invincibility of fascism. Although the actions of August 15 may be small in military terms and without much effect, the shots fired by these first partisan groups shattered the deathly silence that the fascist coup regime of September 12, 1980, had imposed on the peoples of Turkey and Kurdistan. The fascist junta had already ruled the country with an iron hand for almost four years.

Despite the coup of March 12, 1971, despite the state of emergency, despite the illegalization of many revolutionary organizations, despite the execution and murder of the leaders of the revolutionary youth of Turkey, the rulers did not succeed in breaking the resistance and the emergence of the revolutionary movement.

On the contrary, especially from the second half of the 1970s onward, the apoist movement was now growing rapidly, particularly in Kurdistan. Therefore, the forces of counterrevolution once again sought refuge with the Turkish military. This time under the direct direction and leadership of the USA and NATO. Organized through their secret networks and through the deep state, via the CIA, MIT and Gladio, the Turkish military coup on September 12, 1980, establishing a terror regime of unprecedented brutality. Already in the years before, hundreds of revolutionaries and democrats fell victim to the attacks of the counter-guerrillas and the assaults of the fascists, but after September 12 the situation was to change radically. A wave of violence and repression rolled through the entire country. Hundreds of thousands were arbitrarily arrested and taken to the junta's torture cellars.

Hundreds of revolutionaries were executed by the fascist executioners or else extra-legally executed on the spot. It was enough to say a wrong word, to speak the wrong language or even to be wrongly denounced by an informer to disappear into the dungeons.

With the most brutal torture methods, which were in no way inferior to the practices in the fascist murder camps of Nazi Germany, the will of the revolution was to be broken and Turkey, but above all Kurdistan, was to be "pacified".

For the revolutionary movement in Turkey and Kurdistan, the September 12 coup was a shock and caught most organizations off guard. Within a very short time, any oppositional voice was brutally silenced and the revolutionary organizations were either crushed or forced into exile. No social force at that time was able to put up even the slightest resistance against the fascist coup regime, and so hopelessness, capitulation and betrayal ate and betrayal, like a poison, ate through the ranks of the revolution.

The darkness of fascism spread over the societies of Turkey and Kurdistan like a leaden mantle at that time. Thus they hoped to smother the fire of the revolution.

Most of the petty-bourgeois forces distanced themselves from the armed struggle and the anti-fascist resistance at that time¹⁹ and sought refuge in the European metropolises instead.

Retreat and built up

Even the then still newborn leadership of the Kurdistan Revolution, the PKK, was hit hard by the military coup and suffered severe losses in the events of September 1980.

The leadership of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, had moved to Syria as early as 1979 in accordance with his analysis of the worsening socio-economic contradictions in the country and under the impression of the increase in state terrorism in anticipation of the coup. From there, he went on to the base areas of the revolution in the Middle East at the time, namely the camps of the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon to begin preparations for the establishment of a central academy.

When the time came for the military coup to become a reality, it was clear that a tactical withdrawal would have to take place if the PKK wanted to retain its ability to act. So the order was given to withdraw, and a vanishingly small group of less than 100 cadres managed to safely leave the country, enter the liberated areas in Lebanon, and reach the safe retreat sites there. Meanwhile, thousands of cadres and sympathizers of the party, democrats and Kurdish patriots were arrested in the aftermath of the coup and imprisoned in the NATO camps of Turkish fascism.

In the liberated territories of Lebanon, the revolutionary forces of the Palestinian liberation movement, with the support of patriotic and progressive forces of Lebanon, had succeeded in winning an important position, a place of retreat and a place of education for the revolution in the Middle East. Once here, the small group immediately began preparations to return to the country and resume the armed struggle. Even then it was clear that nothing could be achieved with a rash, unprepared strike.

Taking steps too quickly and not waging the war with the right methods would mean the certain death of the fighters and thus the liquidation of the organization and, consequently, the total victory of fascism.

If a war against fascism was to be launched in Kurdistan, it had to be developed on the basis of the strategy and military doctrine of the oppressed of the 20th century and a guerrilla capable of unfolding the protracted people's war according to the conditions in the country and according to the conditions of the societies of Kurdistan had to be built. Thus began a period of intensive ideological and military preparation and education for the group in Lebanon.

The later commander of the August 15 offensive and later commander-in-chief of the Kurdistan Liberation Forces, Mahsum Korkmaz, better known by his code name Agit, actively participated in this phase of preparation at the time.

Of course, even within the organization this process was not without contradictions. Within the organization itself, petty-bourgeois and reformist elements tried to impose a line that envisaged exile in Europe and political legal struggle instead of armed struggle against fascism.

They vehemently resisted the party leadership's line. In the end, thanks to Abdullah Ocalan's consistent ideological struggle, especially under the impression of the incomparable resistance that the party's leading cadres and sympathizers put up in the torture cellars of Amed in 1982, the line of resistance succeeded against that of surrender.

Especially the resistance in the prisons, where so many valuable comrades gave their lives rather than capitulate to the enemy and break and betray their identity and integrity as revolutionary militants. This resistance clarified the principles within the organization and created a line of unconditional resistance from which August 15 would be born.

In response, a group began preparations as early as the winter of 1982. A group of eight young partisans, led by Comrade Şahin Kilavus, attempted to enter occupied Northern Kurdistan to begin armed propaganda. However, before the group could reach its destination, the comrades fell while crossing the Hezil River between Southern Kurdistan and Northern Kurdistan, thus becoming immortal.

It was not to succeed in starting the armed struggle in 1982. Despite several attempts, it took until 1984 before the decision could finally be put into practice. On August 15, the time had come. In the two small northern Kurdish towns of Şemzînan and Dihe, armed propaganda units led by Şehid Agit opened the offensive, declaring the establishment of the Kurdistan Liberation Forces. The Kurdistan Freedom Guerrilla thus entered the stage of world history for the first time and Turkish fascism was defied for the first time in four years.

With the declaration of the HRK (Hêzen Rizgarîya Kurdistan), the Kurdistan Liberation Forces, an answer was given to the fascist coup regime. For the first time, a small group of a few dozen guerrilla fighters showed that fascism is not invulnerable, but can be defeated with the necessary determination and courage.

The military coup of September 12, 1980, itself is also by no means to be considered an isolated phenomenon, but must be viewed in the context of imperialism's general intervention in the region. Especially against this background, August 15 takes on even greater significance: a regional one, but also an international and global one. After the events of Black September, in which imperialism and its regional collaborators succeeded in ousting the Palestinian guerrillas from Jordan, the revolution gained new strength in Lebanon. Not only the forces of the Palestinian liberation movement but also the various progressive democratic revolutionary forces of Lebanese society had united there and were gaining more and more influence. For these, but also for numerous other regionally and internationally active guerrilla groups, Lebanon became a place of retreat, networking, coordination and education.

With the invasion of July 1982, the Zionist occupation forces, together with their local proxies, the fascist Phalange militias, attempted to advance into the south of the country. This invasion was intended to break not only the resistance of the Palestinian movement, but rather the revolutionary center of the entire region and with it the hope for liberation. The concept of guerrilla was to be extinguished in the Middle East. Guerrilla warfare as a form of warfare, which had already proven successful in various struggles in Asia, South America and Africa, as a form of warfare of the oppressed, reached the Middle East through the struggle of the Palestinian Fedayin, of the Palestinian liberation movement.

Now the imperialists and the regional reactionary powers, the regional counterrevolution, were concerned with destroying the last remnants of the guerrilla struggle, because the armed fighting groups of the Turkish left had been defeated after the coup and also the resistance in Iran had disappeared in the torture cellars of the then newly coming to power Mullah regime or had been shot in the execution squares by thousands. The revolution in the Middle East and with it the hope for liberation through armed struggle gathered in Lebanon these days.

Therefore, when the invasion began, the PKK did not hesitate and participated in the resistance against the Zionist occupation with all its strength and by using all its available forces. The importance of the Palestinian revolution, the importance of the struggle in Lebanon also for the entire region and for Kurdistan, was obvious.

The PKK never saw itself as a guest in Lebanon but was convinced, in accordance with its line, that the struggle of the Palestinian and Lebanese people is one with the national liberation struggle of Kurdistan. That the front of the revolution in the Middle East must be united or it will not be.

The Kurdistan Liberation Movement learned from the experience and practice of the Palestinian resistance and thus also took upon itself the responsibility of taking up the flag of revolution in the Middle East and carrying it forward.

After the invasion of 1982, the revolutionary forces in Lebanon were put on the defensive, but the revolution in the Middle East did not weaken because of this, it only shifted its focus. We can say that the struggle of the Palestinian guerrillas and the revolutionary movement of Lebanon was revived with the August 15 offensive in the mountains of Kurdistan and was continued there.

Thus, the attempt to silence the method of guerrilla struggle and thus the hope for liberation once and for all has also failed. This attempt of the imperialists failed thanks to the determined attitude of Kurdistan's guerrillas.

On the remote mountain peaks of Kurdistan, the revolution was able to regain strength and experience. It used the time to prepare for a new offensive.

Resistance growth

What began then, what began 36 years ago today on August 15, with small groups of partisans with miserable equipment, was soon to turn into a people's army of thousands. August 15 unleashed all the energy and potential of decades of oppressed Kurdish society in all four parts of Kurdistan and outside the country as well, and ensured that this struggle became the cause of millions of people within a few years. The mass uprisings in the early 1990s in northern Kurdistan marked the beginning of the national resurgence of the Kurdish people and thus also made the Kurdistan revolution a reality that could not be ignored either in the region or globally.

Against all their lies and propaganda about the end of history and the end of the revolution after 1989, the guerrillas in Kurdistan continued their struggle in the 1990s against all odds and insisted on the line of resistance rather than surrender.

We can say without a doubt that all the achievements we can see in the region today are the result of the revolutionary offensive of August 15: all the progress of the past years and decades, starting from the political-democratic struggle in Turkey and Northern Kurdistan, through the guerrilla areas and the liberated mountains that exist today, the self-government of the Yazidi people in Shengal, to the revolution in Northeast Syria. These achievements would not even be remotely imaginable without the past 36 years of armed struggle and the sacrifices that have been made there.

With the onset of the so-called Arab Spring, the Spring of the Peoples of the Region, and the regional uprising of 2011, the revolution in the Middle East has managed to be on the offensive once again, and today the revolution is again spreading in all directions from the liberated mountains of Kurdistan to the plains of northeastern Syria. Despite all attacks, conspiracies and ambushes, the Kurdistan Revolution preserves its revolutionary and consistent line and is stronger today than ever before.

36 years ago, the fascist colonist enemy, the Turkish occupation in Northern Kurdistan, claimed that they would deal with this "small group of criminals" within a few days. Today, after 36 years, we see that this struggle has also brought the fascist regime in Turkey, the fascist Turkish state to the brink of its annihilation. Not only that, but it has also made all the plans and games of imperialism in the region come to naught once and for all.

Not just a regional confrontation

As repeatedly emphasized before in numerous analyses and assessments, the current confrontation, that is, the ongoing war between the revolutionary forces and Turkish fascism, is more than a small regional confrontation, more than a small limited struggle. The war may be waged from the Turkish state today and on the battlefield we encounter Turkish fascism, its gangs and allies as a direct opponent.

However, the forces behind it, that is, the real masterminds of this war and the architects of what we call the international complot, are NATO, for one thing, the forces of capitalist modernity and, as their leadership and vanguard, none other than the United States of America, North American imperialism itself. Therefore, we can say that the war that is unfolding before our eyes and continues to gain momentum is actually the expression of a global confrontation between two worldviews, between two ideologies, between two ways of life. That is, the struggle between revolution and counterrevolution, between democratic and between capitalist modernity. It may well be that the various imperialist powers and regional nation-states are pursuing competing interests at the tactical level, but at the strategic level they are united by a common goal against revolution. This common goal welds them together into a global front of counterrevolution. When the self-proclaimed ideologists and thinkers of capitalist modernity were already rashly proclaiming their final victory, declaring the end of history and the end of ideologies after the disintegration and dissolution of the state-socialist camp at the beginning of the 1990s, most of the liberation movements of the time collapsed under the pressure of the newly created global equilibrium and laid down their arms, laid down their weapons before their oppressors and capitulated.

Quite a few surrendered and defected to the enemy camp. The majority of the national liberation movements behaved in this way. In Europe, too, the revolutionary left went on the defensive. The urban guerrillas in Western Europe had to admit defeat for the time being. Socialism as a perspective for the liberation of humanity not only lost much of its appeal at that time, but also fell more and more into disrepute, and people sought distance from socialist ideology. Hopelessness and the mistaken belief that there can be no alternative became widespread, and the global revolutionary movement was only able to provide very limited answers to the new situation.

With the exception of a few movements, a few thinkers, no adequate answer could be given. However, the leadership of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, insisted that there had to be a solution without falling into betrayal. With his new analyses and with a strict insistence on the revolutionary line, he tried to counteract the ideological crisis that was spreading at that time.

He stated that with real socialism, socialism as such could by no means have failed.

For socialism itself is the essence of humanity. Socialism is the ideology turned, systematized expression of the history of resistance of thousands of years. It represents all hopes for a free tomorrow, for a free future and a dignified life. Thus, what disintegrated with state socialism represents only one stage of experience and one stage in the development of the socialist movement. Therefore, it is not necessary to capitulate, but to hold on to the hope of liberation, because as he said at that time: To insist on socialism means to insist on

being human. Already in the 1990s he analyzed very correctly that without socialism as ideology and guide of mankind no answer can be given to the great questions of mankind and to the problems of the 21st century.

From the question of women's freedom to the ecological catastrophe towards which humanity is heading - without socialism, as the ideology of liberation, none of these problems can be adequately answered. But when we talk about socialism, we also have to learn from the mistakes and overcome the shortcomings and ideological weaknesses of the old socialist paradigm, i.e. the etatist, the state socialist paradigm.

Stand by socialism

To stand by socialism also means to criticize it and to develop it further. Thus, the PKK has made it its task and duty to carry the flag of socialism and revolution into the 21st century. and to carry it further. With the paradigm of democratic modernity developed by Abdullah Ocalan, it was also possible to overcome the position of mere criticism and systematically outline the main characteristics of the alternative. The alternative that today in Rojava is becoming a lively reality.

Precisely because the PKK did not surrender in the 1990s, i.e., because it neither laid down its arms nor was ideologically swallowed up by liberalism like many others, the forces of capitalist modernity formed a front against the freedom movement.

The reality of a fighting guerrilla could not be tolerated by them under any circumstances. Because the reality of a fighting guerrilla fundamentally calls into question the end of history. Therefore, it had to be eradicated at all costs.

However, neither the global criminalization policy, this worldwide witch hunt that was started against the PKK under the name of the fight against global terrorism, the special war and the blackest anti-propaganda, nor the brutal war of extermination of the Turkish state under the leadership of NATO in the 1990s, in which tens of thousands of people fell victim, nor the conspiracy against the leadership of the organization, which ended in the abduction and kidnapping of Abdullah Ocalan, could bring the organization to its knees.

While the forces behind the complot were eagerly waiting to see the PKK break up in the early 2000s and were working, especially from within, to strengthen a liberal and compromising line with the help of a few agents and collaborators, the party was reorganizing itself anew, making a fundamental paradigm shift based on criticism of the real-socialist paradigm.

It reorganized the guerrilla forces by transforming the Kurdistan People's Liberation Army ARGK into the People's Defense Forces HPG. Armed combat resumed with the offensive of June 1, 2004. The liberation movement thus declared that even in the 21st century the question of armed struggle, and thus the question of revolutionary self-defense, has not lost its relevance.

Abdullah Öcalan intervened in this process with his defense writings from prison, which became a guideline for the new era, both theoretically and practically. With his perspectives, he broke through the isolation and managed to give the movement a new direction. He thus succeeded, above all, in eradicating the liberal confusions that were spreading at the time under the leadership of individuals.

The question of armed struggle is answered by him in the new paradigm with the principle of legitimate self-defense. This, however, is a basic condition for securing one's own existence. Just as every living being has a mechanism of self-defense, so every society must be capable of defending itself if it is to preserve its existence. For society, this means that any structure of counter power that is created must also be capable of defending itself against the power of the rulers. Wherever society strives to establish a self-governing life, - a life beyond the oppression of state and capital - there self-defense is not only a legitimate right but also the most urgent necessity. This principle of legitimate self-defense, which was stated as a principle in the first defense writings, was systematized into the strategy of the Revolutionary People's War with the experience of the years and with the help of the subsequent prison writings and Öcalan's perspectives in 2010, and has since been constantly developed, differentiated and refined through practical application.

What is clear is that the question of armed struggle in the 21st century is not a question that can be answered theoretically at a desk, but that its answer can only be provided practically through trials and new initiatives, through ongoing experimentation and failure, and with the help of the lessons learned, that is, through continuous dialectical evolution.

Old and new concepts

Old concepts, the tactics and methods of the 20th century, such as the classic land and urban guerrilla that might have played their role in the 20th century but are outdated today, must be overcome and redefined according to the new socio-economic realities of globalized financial capitalism, but also according to the level of technological and scientific development.

Therefore, the development of the guerrilla of the 21st century, a modern and professionalized guerrilla, is one of the strategic projects that the Kurdistan Freedom Movement has put on its agenda, especially during the past five years of war. How and with what methods can the oppressed be victorious in the 21st century? How to undermine and neutralize the tremendous technological superiority of the enemy? How to behave in the face of new reconnaissance and espionage techniques, and how can the guerrillas adapt to the general and very fundamental doctrinal changes in the warfare of the 21st century? These are all questions that the freedom warriors of Kurdistan have set themselves the task of answering today, and the answers to which they are providing in practical terms.

At the same time, the question of guerrillas in the 21st century is by no means one that is only relevant to Kurdistan or the Middle East.

To prove that it must be possible, can be possible, even today, using the right methods, to stand and win against a highly technologized NATO army, is a question that concerns all the oppressed of the world and all revolutionaries alike. The question is, in fact, whether there is still hope in the 21st century and whether a perspective of liberation is visible and recognizable on the horizon of our struggle. Because without a perspective of success in the armed struggle, of course, no perspective of liberation is conceivable globally. When we speak of armed struggle in the 21st century, it must be said, of course, that we must definitely abandon linear and narrow conceptions of armed struggle and revolutionary strategies that arise from them. First the armed struggle, unconditional and linear until the seizure of power, then the creation of the new society: In the 21st century, we must definitely say goodbye to all concepts based on this old idea of revolution, which originated in the state-socialist paradigm. Not only will such a war in the 21st century be unlikely to produce results, the use of the tools of state power to create a society of any kind from above has not been shown to lead to the desired liberation. Rather, in the end, they unintentionally provided the best services to hegemonic modernity. This also applies to the question of armed struggle. Therefore, the building of social counter-power and armed struggle, the creation of structures and organs of autonomous self-administration and, in turn, their safeguarding by forces of self-defense created by society itself, form a unity in the revolutionary process. Not one comes before the other, both do progress intertwined. The construction of the new, the construction of the liberated society therefore begins in the here and now, and the resistance to secure the gains fought for only thereby becomes meaningful and receives its legitimacy. This is always about safeguarding created structures, about defending what society has fought for. Construction, resistance and the opening of new free spaces progress step by step and are interwoven with one another, thus expanding the areas of social counter-power and displacing the state forces bit by bit, piece by piece.

Phases of resistance

Because the process is not linear, there will always be periods of negotiation, periods of truce, perhaps even temporary agreements of coexistence. But there will also always be conflicts and wars. Neither unconditional submission for the sake of a false peace nor a narrow and reduced exclusive focus on armed struggle will lead to success. The point is to have a flexible approach. Just as we need to be strong and clear in principles, while we can show a flexible approach politically, it is necessary to be flexible in the question of armed struggle and not to have a rigid and linear approach.

But nevertheless, even if the confrontation between revolution and counterrevolution cannot be linear and always passes and will pass through different periods, it is still important to note at this point that on the ideological level there is a deep and insurmountable hostility, this hostility will remain and thus self-defense must never be neglected.

No achievement will endure without the existence of a powerful self-defense force.

Wherever society gives in and lets its resistance slide, therefore acts negligently and carelessly in the face of the enemy, the state will waste no time and go on the counterattack, forcibly reversing the revolutionary process and taking all the achievements back out of the hands of the people.

Then as now: without a people's army, the people have nothing. It is possible, within the framework of the legal policy of bourgeois legislation, to establish structures of self-governance to reconquer bit by bit the areas of social life occupied by the state, and this should be done. The possibilities of legal politics must be fully taken advantage of. But the whole thing goes only up to a certain point. When the ideological and cultural hegemony of the system over the masses is broken, that is, when the institution of the state itself loses its meaning and is replaced by self-established organs of the people, the state will always show its true face and reveal its very essence. It will resort to the last means of controlling the masses, namely the organized use of force.

This reality has become very clear in the process of self-governance resistance in 2015/2016 in occupied Northern Kurdistan. Over the years, self-governing structures, municipalities, councils, cooperatives and cultural institutions, even their own judiciary, were created by the people themselves within the framework of legal politics. The state lost more and more of its meaning. By 2015 its power was based only on the existence of its police and occupation forces. When Turkish fascism recognized this reality, they attacked with all brutality. In response, the people of Kurdistan unilaterally declared democratic autonomy and proceeded to armed self-defense.

The process of self-governance resistance lasted almost a year and was violently repressed in the spring of 2016 after the establishment of the YPS and YPS-Jin Civil Defense Forces and an unprecedented war of resistance that lasted for months in most cities in northern Kurdistan. The resistive cities of northern Kurdistan were devastated and razed to the ground. The struggle, which is always an ideological one, but sometimes has an ecological, political and cultural expression, always turns into the most direct and unembellished form of confrontation, the military confrontation, at the decisive turning points, before the achievement of a new quality of revolutionary struggle.

So what do we conclude from this? If in the last instance it is always the organized violence, the power of the state and the ruling class that remains, then in order to successfully implement and defend a revolutionary social project, we must know how to challenge this very violence powerfully, determinedly and successfully. Therefore, with all the advantages taken of legal politics, it is necessary never to neglect the dimension of self-defense in the construction of revolutionary social structures, but always to think about and prepare for this reality from the very beginning.

Self-defense has many different dimensions. We are not only talking about armed struggle and not only about armed units. We are also talking about forms of cultural defense, forms of ideological defense against special warfare, we are talking about the fact that people in their neighborhoods must take their security into their own hands, so that the police and security services of the state lose their meaning. The term self-defense has many different dimensions. But we can still say that whoever talks about revolution and challenging the power of the ruling class must also talk about legitimate self-defense, which necessarily means armed struggle.

The necessity of the armed struggle

Lenin put it correctly when he wrote that the oppressed who does not strive to gain knowledge in the use of weapons and to take the weapon in his own hands deserves to be oppressed.

So if we want to be more than just supplicants at the throne of rule, if we want to write history ourselves, then it is also necessary to never put down the gun and make self-defense an integral part of social life in accordance with the strategy of the Revolutionary People's War. Just as society is self-governing, determines its own destinies, makes its own policies, organizes production collectively, fulfills its needs collectively, so it must also be able to defend itself. Every city, every neighborhood, every business that has been won over must also be defended. And self-defense must not be a matter for a professionalized group of people alone. Self-defense must definitely not be monopolized or centralized. In the end, all this only leads to the nationalization of the revolution and to processes like those we already know from the last century. We can say that therefore self-defense must be spread throughout the whole society. It must be organized horizontally and be an activity in which everyone, regardless of age, activity or gender, participates in their villages, in their neighborhoods, as it were. If the power of the state is based largely on the exploitation of society's need for security, then we can say that one of the greatest revolutionary acts is to restore society's ability to provide for its own security. In the revolution in northeastern Syria, we can already see very clearly

today, through the example of the HPC and HPC-Jin society defense units, the image of a future in which the militia organization of society, the self-defense organization of society, the standing army and the police structure, will overcome the centralized formations of self-defense. The guarantee that the revolution will not nationalize and that the self-organization of society will prevail against all centralist tendencies is always the organization of self-defense from the base.

Especially in the last five years of the war, the movement managed to practically put into practice the methods of the 21st century guerrilla. This was done with the help of the experiences of the 2015/2016 urban war in northern Kurdistan and the war in the mountains, as well as thanks to the lessons learned from the defense of Rojava against the Turkish occupation.

After withdrawing from the cities in 2016, the YPS and YPS-Jin civil defense units began a broad restructuring and reorganization process. This process of reorganization showed its fruits for the first time in the past three months. Instead of static defense on the barricades and a war of positions, the units of YPS reorganized as an urban guerrilla, professionalized and invisible to the enemy, whose cells and revenge squads have been striking non-stop since May this year. At that time, YPS/YPS-Jin started their new offensive against Turkish colonial fascism, its supporters, collaborators and agents. From attacks on the enemy's technical infrastructure, to acts of sabotage, to professional military actions against the special forces of the Turkish police in the cities, the guerrilla units accomplished numerous successful actions during these months.

Carrying the war back

On the other hand, there are the various autonomous revenge units, such as the Children of Fire initiative, which have been turning the enemy's seemingly safe hinterland, the metropolises of western Turkey and the economically important tourist areas into a war zone with their mass arson attacks for months. These independent initiatives, such as the Children of Fire, but also many other smaller groups and organizations, bring a piece of the war back to its places of origin in western Turkey. With lighter and match, the most effective and unstoppable weapons of the 21st century, as they say themselves, Kurdish youth on their own initiative bring a piece of the war back into the heart of the fascist system.

This is, of course, very important, because the clouds of smoke over Istanbul, over Izmir, over Ankara bring down the mirage of false peace and show the whole world, and especially all those for whom Turkey is still a vacation destination, that Turkey is a country at war and that this war will be fought everywhere from now on.

Resistance in Haftanin

In Haftanin, the guerrillas have been putting up an incomparable and heroic resistance for sixty days now. Despite the use of all enemy technology, the Turkish occupiers do not succeed in advancing into the free mountains. They definitely cannot achieve their goal of advancing further south and bringing the area completely under occupation.

With new modern methods and a professional structure, a new way of moving, new tactics, the guerrillas manage to keep the occupation forces at bay and make the Turkish war propaganda come to nothing. From coordinated raids on the advancing occupation forces, to acts of sabotage, the professional use of snipers, and the first targeted attacks from the air, carried out by the guerrillas' new air defense units, the entire repertoire of 21st-century guerrilla tactics is being employed in Haftanin.

In order to hide its own losses, Turkish fascism also uses mercenaries and local collaborators and traitors in Haftanin, who join them in the operation, similar to what happened in northeastern Syria. Nevertheless, there is practical proof that even in the 21st century, despite the most modern reconnaissance technology, despite the enemy's air superiority and their superior firepower, the decisive factor in war is man himself and his will. Even today, guerrilla still means a war of will against technology.

Guerrilla in the 21st century is the proof that man with his creativity, with his perseverance, with his willpower and with his tenacity can stand and win even against such a hostile superiority.

If we look clearly at the picture in Haftanin, it has already become very clear that Turkish fascism miscalculated there. They expected a quick victory and especially in the first days of their offensive they announced in the loudest tones the news of the advance of their troops, but if we look very closely now, all the propagandists have fallen silent and hardly anyone talks about Haftanin anymore.

And why? Because they are beaten. What the commander-in-chief of the People's Defense Forces, Murat Karayilan, very accurately described the year before as a ghost guerrilla, i.e. a guerrilla that can no longer be found but still strikes at any time and in any place, has become a bitter reality for the Turkish occupiers today.

Turkish Fascism's Struggle for Survival

The war unleashed by Turkish fascism in the form of the AKP-MHP regime, supported by the USA, against the revolutionary forces and the peoples of the entire region is definitely more than just a war against the PKK and the guerrillas in the mountains. In their fanatical expansionism, they are using violence against all the peoples of the region, from Syria and Iraq to Libya and Yemen.

For Turkish fascism, this war is a war of being or not being. With all its strength and with the mobilization of large parts of the Turkish society, blinded and incited by the fascist demagoguery, the regime has dragged the whole country, all of Turkey into its predatory war and brought it to the edge of the abyss. Therefore, there is no turning back for them. This war will only end when the AKP-MHP regime, when the dictatorship of Erdogan and Bahçeli lies shattered on the ground.

Today, without a doubt, the greatest obstacle to the breakthrough of the revolution in the Middle East, and thus the strongest bulwark of the regional counterrevolution, is Turkish fascism. If with united forces it will succeed to put the occupiers in their place, to bring down the regime, it is difficult to imagine the regional and global impact, the doors that would open for the spread of the revolution throughout the region and the world.

It is clear that this war will continue to intensify in the time ahead. It will continue to intensify until it reaches its peak in a decisive confrontation between fascism and the forces of the revolution. Both in Rojava as well as in South Kurdistan and in Turkey itself: This regime gone wild will unleash further massacres and further catastrophes against the peoples of the region. It is also clear that only one side will emerge victorious from this confrontation.

Only if we succeed in uniting the struggle on all fronts, the different forces, starting from the revolution in Rojava to the guerrillas in the mountains, the democratic revolutionary opposition in Turkey and of course all other patriotic revolutionary forces in the region, the day of victory over fascism will move within reach. If it is possible to further unite the common revolutionary struggle of the revolutionary left in Turkey and the liberation movement of Kurdistan, both in the mountains and in the cities and metropolises of Turkey, under the banner of the united front of the Peoples' United Revolutionary Movement HBDH, then not only the victory against fascism will appear on the horizon, but also the future of a free democratic Turkey will become visible.

Today is no longer 1980. Today a united front is fighting against fascism. What was despite all efforts not possible then, the construction of a united front, is a reality today and also the right method of struggle has been historically proven in the last 36 years. Today, although the anti-fascist struggle includes numerous civil society forces, legal political parties, trade unions, interest groups, etc., the leadership and vanguard of this struggle clearly lies with the guerrillas in the mountains and in the cities, and the method to crush fascism is the armed struggle.

While the enemy is preparing the next ground invasion against the liberated areas of northeastern Syria in the hope of compensating for their defeat in Haftanin, the global resistance movement in Europe and around the world must also get moving and start preparing for what is coming. The war in northeastern Syria has never stopped and now the next offensive is imminent.

Turkish fascism must be broken and besides all the political, diplomatic, economic pressure, it must also be stopped militarily. Whether this happens in Haftanin, in Northern Kurdistan or in Rojava is irrelevant, but it is time to give the fascist occupation regime the final blow.

The role of the global resistance movement

The global resistance movement can play a decisive role in this. In this war, from now on, it is necessary to think of nothing but victory, because we must not even imagine any other option than success. Whoever doubts today whether it is possible to defeat Turkish fascism should be ashamed of themselves in view of the example of August 15th. If a small group of not even 20 comrades managed to unleash a war of liberation against the second largest NATO army, which began 36 years ago with a first bullet and today has given birth to the greatest revolution of the 21st century, the Revolution of Rojava, then there is nothing that should still be impossible. Against this background, the global resistance movement must not regard itself as a mere supporter, but must make itself a part of the struggle against Turkish fascism. It is necessary to expose the culprits of this war, the supporters and the backers of Turkish fascism worldwide, also outside the Middle East, to get them out of hiding and to resolutely oppose their plottings. While the confrontation between the revolution and Turkish fascism continues to gain momentum day by day and takes on regional dimensions, the resistance movement must also be aware of its role. As a part of the global front against Turkish fascism, it is also necessary to increase the resistance to the maximum in the imperialist countries, in the metropolises of capitalist modernity, and thus to fight not for an unconditional end of the war or an unprincipled peace, but for a real peace through the victory in the revolutionary people's war and thus the breakthrough of the revolution in the Middle East.

As long as Turkish fascism is not defeated, there will be no peace, no common coexistence of peoples in the region and no democratic future for the Middle East. In conclusion, we can repeat that August 15th is definitely not a day that can be commemorated with simple rituals. Only revolutionary action and practice can do justice to the meaning of this anniversary.

We are convinced that in the phase of struggle ahead, in which the revolutionary forces of the region will give their all to achieve victory, the global resistance movement, too, will successfully play its role.

In this sense we say:

Long live the revolutionary offensive of August 15th!

Victory to the Revolutionary People's War in Kurdistan!

Death to fascism!

